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A STUDY ON THE USE OF OPEN GOVERNMENT LEARNING RESOURCES BY THE RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

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Abstract: Open Government Learning Resources encompasses resource materials, tools and practices that are free of legal, financial and technical barriers and can be fully used, shared and adapted in the digital environment, which expanding educational opportunities is more possible now than it has ever been before. Through the Internet, learners can find information instantly on virtually any topic, teachers can share their knowledge with students on another continent almost as easily as in their own classroom, and educational materials can be disseminated to a worldwide audience at virtually no marginal cost, which allows anyone to freely use, adapt and share the resource—anytime, anywhere. So, this study examines the use of open government learning resources by the research scholars of university of north Bengal to fulfil their information needs.

Key Words: Open Government Data, Open Government Initiative, Open Government Learning Resources, Open Government Platform, Open Research Data.

I. Introduction

Open Government Learning Resources encompasses resource materials, tools and practices that are free of legal, financial and technical barriers and can be fully used, shared and adapted in the digital environment, which expanding educational opportunities is more possible now than it has ever been before. Through the Internet, learners can find information instantly on virtually any topic, teachers can share their knowledge with students on another continent almost as easily as in their own classroom, and educational materials can be disseminated to a worldwide audience at virtually no marginal cost, which allows anyone to freely use, adapt and share the resource—anytime, anywhere. So, this examine the use of open government learning resources by the research scholars of university of north Bengal to fulfil their information needs or it is also examine that how the researchers are benefited by using this kind of resources.

II. Objectives of the Study

This study was carried out to determine the use of open government learning resources by the research scholars of University of North Bengal. Specifically, the study was to:

1. Discover the ratio of use of open government learning resources;
2. Examine different types of explored open government learning resource directories;
3. Discover the categories of data which are most consulted;
4. Examine the formats of data which are most explored;
5. Discover reasons for the use of the open government learning resources;
6. Examine some barriers to use the open government learning resources.

III. Research Methodology

The survey method was adopted for the study. A close-ended (-semi) questionnaire was used to gather data from research scholars respectively. In all, 37copies of questionnaires were distributed. 33 out of the 37 distributed to research scholars were completed and returned. Data was analyzed using simple frequency counts and percentages (all percentages are created out of 33 respondents).

IV. Findings and Analysis

Table 1 shows that the larger part of survey population (54.54%) are using open government learning resources just to a limited extent. 21.21% of respondents are using open government learning resources to a large extant. 12.12% research scholars are using just to a considerable purpose and 06.06% respondents are using open government learning resources to a very large extent.

Table 1: Usage of open government learning resources

<i>Usage of resource</i>	No, not at all	Yes, to a limited extent	Yes, to a considerable	Yes, to a large extent	Yes, to a very large extent
No. of responses	2	18	4	7	2
Percentage	06.06%	54.54%	12.12%	21.21%	06.06%

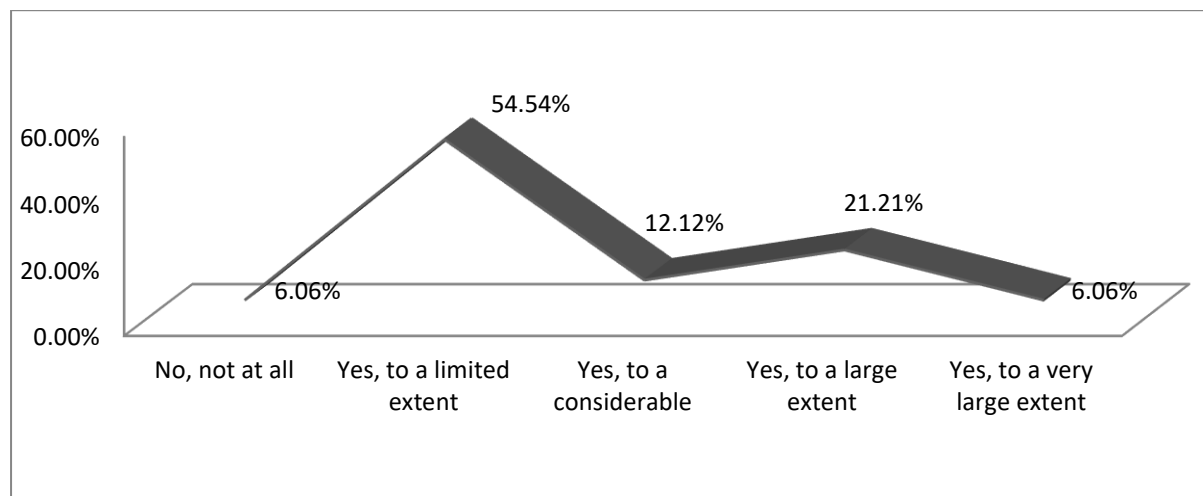


Table 2 shows that the 60.60% respondents are explored *Data.gov.in* (India Government) to access the open government learning resources. 12.12% respondents are using *Data.gov.bd* (Bangladesh Government) to fulfil their needs. 24.24% of respondents are using *Data.gov.uk* (UK Government), 24.24% of respondents are using *Data.gov* (US Government) for their learning purpose. As India local government open data directory 42.42% of respondents are using *nroer.gov.in* (National Repository of Open Educational Resources), 18.18% respondents are using *sakshat.ac.in* (Project of MHRD, Govt of India), 09.09% respondents are using *aview.in* (Project of MHRD, Govt. Of India, Amrita University, IIT Bombay), 30.30% respondents are using *india.gov.in* (National Portal of India), 09.09% respondents are using *meaty.gov.in* (Open Data | Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Govt. of India), 09.09% respondents are using *openforge.gov.in* (Open collaborative software

development, Govt. Of India), and 36.36% respondents are using edistrict.wb.gov.in (West Bengal e-District). 06.06% of respondents are using another international open data directory and 18.18% of respondents are agreeing with others.

Table 2: Explored open government learning resource directories

<i>Directories</i>	No. of responses	Percentage
Data.gov.in (India Government)	20	60.60%
Data.gov.bd (Bangladesh Government)	4	12.12%
Data.gov.uk (UK Government)	8	24.24%
Data.gov (US Government)	8	24.24%
Another India local government open data directory		
<i>nroer.gov.in (National Repository of Open Educational Resources)</i>	14	42.42%
<i>sakshat.ac.in (Project of MHRD, Govt of India)</i>	6	18.18%
<i>aview.in (Project of MHRD, Govt. Of India, Amrita University, IIT Bombay)</i>	3	09.09%
<i>india.gov.in (National Portal of India)</i>	10	30.30%
<i>meaty.gov.in (Open Data / Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Govt. of India)</i>	3	09.09%
<i>openforge.gov.in (Open collaborative software development, Govt. Of India)</i>	3	09.09%
<i>edistrict.wb.gov.in (West Bengal e-District)</i>	12	36.36%
Another international open data directory	2	06.06%
Others	6	18.18%

Table 3 shows that the categories of ‘Education and Skills Data’ and ‘Population Data’ are most consulted to the research scholars of North Bengal University which is respectively 54.54%. 30.30% respondents are mostly consulted with crime and justice data. 03.03% respondents are using Business Data, 42.42% respondents are using Environment & Weather Data, 27.27% respondents are using Health and Disability Data, 24.24% respondents are using Labour Market Data, 06.06% respondents are using Transport Data, 03.03% respondents are using Web Analytics Data, 24.24% respondents are using Legal and Administrative Data, 36.36% respondents are using Economy and Trade Data, 09.09% respondents are using Geographical data, 33.33% respondents are using Political data and 06.06% of respondents are agreeing with others.

Table 3: Categories of data which are most consulted;

<i>Categories of data</i>	No. of responses	Percentage
Business Data	1	03.03%
Crime and Justice Data	10	30.30%
Education and Skills Data	18	54.54%
Environment & Weather Data	14	42.42%
Health and Disability Data	9	27.27%

Labour Market Data	8	24.24%
Population Data	18	54.54%
Transport Data	2	06.06%
Web Analytics Data	1	03.03%
Legal and Administrative Data	8	24.24%
Economy and Trade Data	12	36.36%
Geographical data	3	09.09%
Political data	11	33.33%
Other	2	06.06%

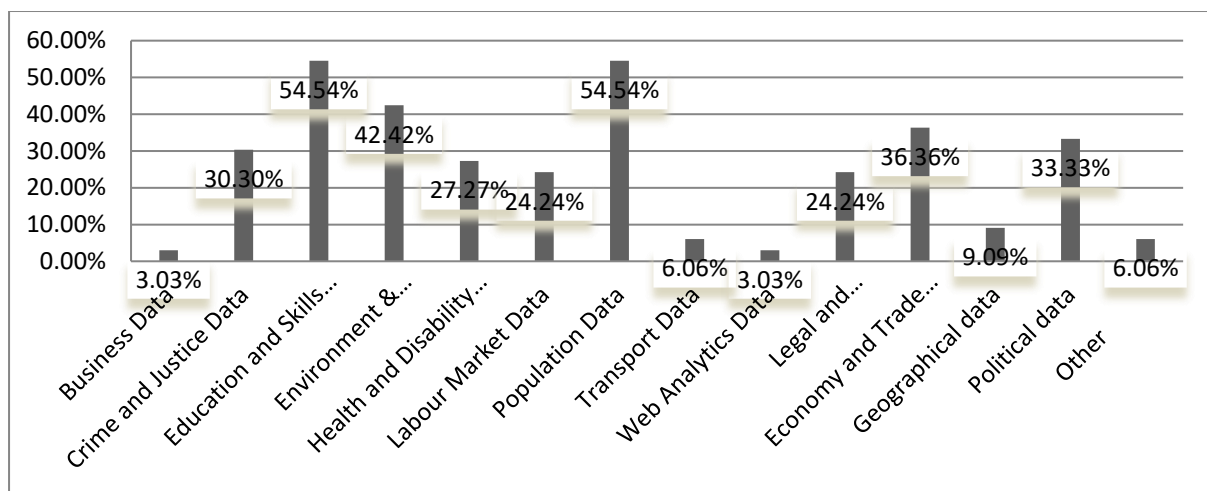


Table 4 shows that the formats of resources which are most consulted, according to the response of all respondents, PDF file is top most consulted formats to the research scholars and 78.78% respondents are voted Word documents, 75.75% respondents are voted Web pages, 63.63% of respondents are voted Power Point Presentation, 45.45% of respondents are voted on Excel Spreadsheet, 33.33% of respondents are elected video clip, 06.06% of respondents are voted CSV, 09.09% of respondents are voted on RDFa and 15.15% of respondents are voted with others.

Table 4: Formats of resources which are most consulted

Formats	PDF files	Web pages	Excel Spreadsheet	Video clips	Power Point Presentation	Word doc.	Comma Separated Values	eXtensible Markup language	JSON	RDFa	Others
No. of responses	33	25	15	11	21	26	2	0	1	3	5
Percentage	100%	75.75%	45.45%	33.33%	63.63%	78.78%	06.06%	00.00%	3.03%	9.09%	15.15%

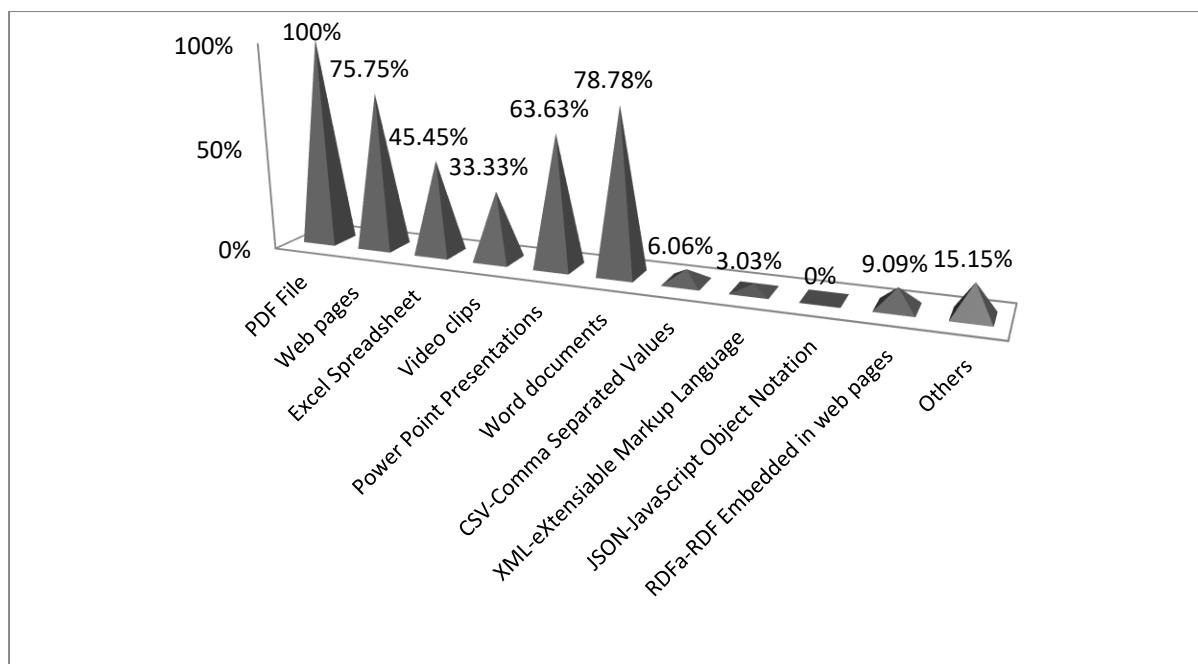


Table 5 shows that the reasons for the use of the open government learning resources by research scholars of North Bengal University. 54.54% of respondents are arguing that ‘Gaining access to the best possible resources’ is a very important reason for access to the open government learning resources. 57.57% of respondents are agreeing that ‘Promote scientific research and education as publicly open activities’ is an important reason for access to the open government learning resources. 57.57% of respondents are arguing that ‘Bringing down costs of learning’ is a very important reason for access to the open government learning resources. 54.54% of respondents are arguing that ‘Creating more flexible materials’ is an important reason and also 45.45% of respondents are agreeing that ‘Finding previous research and development’ reason for access to the open government learning resources.

Table 5: Goals or benefits to access the open government learning resources.

<i>Goals or Benefits</i>	Very important		Important		Considerable		Limited		Unimportant	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gaining access to the best possible resources	18	54.54%	13	39.39%	1	03.03%	1	03.03%	0	00.00%
Promote scientific research and education as publicly open activities	13	39.39%	19	57.57%	0	00.00%	1	03.03%	0	00.00%
Bringing down costs of learning	19	57.57%	11	33.33%	3	09.09%	0	00.00%	0	00.00%
Creating more flexible materials	12	36.36%	18	54.54%	2	06.06%	1	03.03%	0	00.00%
Finding previous research and development	15	45.45%	11	33.33%	5	15.15%	2	06.06%	0	00.00%

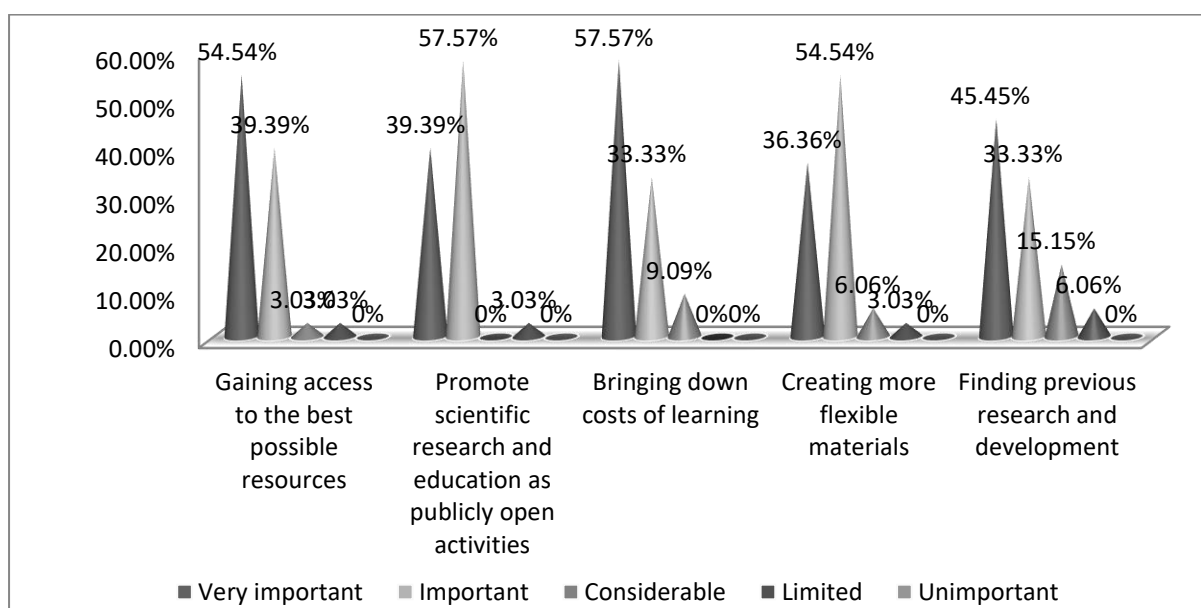
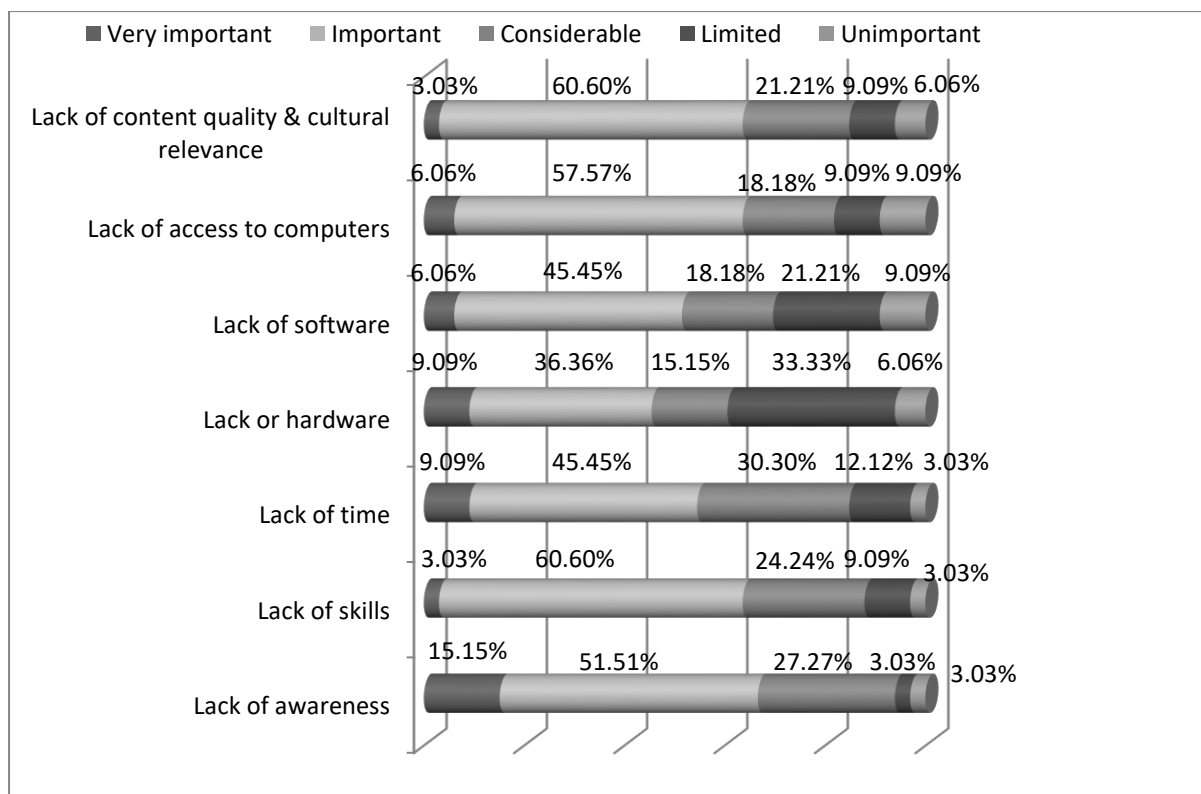


Table 6 shows that the barriers to access the open government learning resources. According to the response of total sample 51.51% of respondents are state that lack of awareness is an important barriers to access the open government learning resources. 60.60% of respondents are state that lack of skill is an important barrier to access the open government learning resources. 45.45% of respondents are state that lack of time is an important barrier to access the open government learning resources, 36.36% of respondents are state that lack of hardware is an important barriers to access the open government learning resources, 57.57% of respondents are state that lack of software is an important barriers to access the open government learning resources, 57.57% of respondents are state that lack of computer is an important barriers to access the open government learning resources and also 60.60% of respondents are state that lack of content quality and cultural relevance is an important barriers to access the open government learning resources.

Table 6: Barriers to access the open government learning resources

	Very important		Important		Considerable		Limited		Unimportant	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lack of awareness	3	15.15%	17	51.51%	9	27.27%	1	03.03%	1	03.03%
Lack of skills	1	03.03%	20	60.60%	8	24.24%	3	09.09%	1	03.03%
Lack of time	3	09.09%	15	45.45%	10	30.30%	4	12.12%	1	03.03%
Lack or hardware	3	09.09%	12	36.36%	5	15.15%	11	33.33%	2	06.06%
Lack of software	2	06.06%	15	45.45%	6	18.18%	7	21.21%	3	09.09%
Lack of access to computers	2	06.06%	19	57.57%	6	18.18%	3	09.09%	3	09.09%
Lack of content quality and cultural relevance	1	03.03%	20	60.60%	7	21.21%	3	09.09%	2	06.06%



VI. Interpretation

Through the journey of our survey we meet various research scholars of University North Bengal and interact with them, communicate with them. Various views were come. By taking their views and their suggestion; finally we are coming to this conclusion-

That most of the respondents are using open government learning resources just to a limited extent in case of their learning purpose. 60.60% of respondents are explored 'data.gov.in' and 42.42% respondents are explored 'nroer.gov.in' as open government learning resource directories for their learning purpose. Through this study we can also find that 'Crime and Justice Data' and 'Population Data' are most consulted to the respondents, and it is identified that PDF, Web pages, Excel Spreadsheet, Power Point Presentations and Word documents are most helpful resources to them. But due to the lack of awareness and skills, till now the use of open government learning resources are at their initial stage. Government needs to promote and must be aware to the today's learners about the benefits of this kind of open government learning resources, and we can suggest that a chapter on the topic of 'open government learning resources and its application' must be include in the research coursework programmes.

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